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EMBASSY OF THE  
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
Buenos Aires

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September 27, 1979

OFFICIAL-INFORMAL

Claus W. Ruser, Esquire  
Director, East Coast Affairs  
ARA/ECA

Department of State  
Washington, D.C. 20520

ARGENTINA PROJECT (S200000044)

U.S. DEPT. OF STATE, A/RPS/IPS

Margaret P. Grafeld, Director

( ) Release (X) Excise ( ) Deny

Exemption(s):

B6

Declassify: ( ) In Part (X) In Full

( ) Classify as ( ) Extend as ( ) Downgrade to

Date Declassify on Reason

Dear Claus:

Tuesday night was Timerman's despedida. When General Viola told the Ambassador about Timerman's departure, he asked what they would have to discuss in the future since Timerman had always been topic number one on the Ambassador's list. In the Embassy we are wondering how Marshall Meyer will occupy himself, since he had tended to neglect his congregation in favor of Timerman.

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The really interesting developments in Argentina will be in the military politics of the next month or so. We still do not know what to make of recent developments such as the Supreme Court decision, the IAHRC visit, the disappearances, and the elimination of Mendizabal and Croatta. The Ambassador said General Viola was unusually anxious during the meeting on September 25 and said he simply did not know how the military would sort itself out. We were all hoping that the Commission visit would come to symbolize a major milepost in this government's transition to normality. That still may be the case, but the shocks of the past week may instead have unsettled military politics and strengthened the blindly reactionary hardliners. Viola implies as much and others suggest that the disposal of the two Montoneros will simply serve to confirm the view of the hardliners

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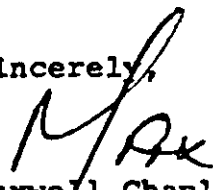
that their counterterrorist tactics have been the correct ones. We hope the military reach some consensus about the current situation before Patt's testimony on October 18.

Since dictating the above, the bombing of the Klein house has occurred, and that may well be a response of one sector of the military to recent events. We also note that yesterday the GOA felt called upon to formally deny a Clarín story which implied that Videla had made a commitment to Andres Aguilar to free Timerman, or that Pastor had discussed human rights with the Secretary in New York. To this we add press reports that Videla imposed the decision to free Timerman on the Generals by a threat to resign. In our discussion of all this at the meeting this morning, the Ambassador reemphasized that Viola was deadly serious when he said on Tuesday that the military was in serious disarray and he didn't know how matters would turn out. At the moment, military politics seem to be taking an ominous turn.

We have had only a glance at the enclosure to your letter which described a secret camp identified as Olimpio. The Political Section will try to determine if it is a new location. The other location was well known and has been destroyed. The Commission reportedly made two unprogrammed visits to sites which were presumed to have been secret prisons, but we have no report on the details.

We follow the process you describe as the erosion of safeguards with considerable interest. As you know, we have always felt that the emphasis on deferring reprocessing was made at a potential risk to full scope safeguards. We hope the discussions in Switzerland are productive.

Sincerely,

  
Maxwell Chaplin

Enclosures

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